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Mrs. Breeskin to Leave Gallery; Difference on Art Policy Hinted

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By Jean M. White
Staff Reporter

Adelyn D. Breeskin is resigning as director of the Washington Gallery of Modern Art, apparently because of a split over esthetics and administration.

The announcement that Mrs. Breeskin will retire "on or about" June 1 was made public yesterday.

Since the Gallery was founded two seasons ago, there has been "discussion," as one spokesman termed it, over the exhibit policy. Mrs. Breeskin has felt the Gallery should give attention to the historical approach, tracing the roots of contemporary art. Others have argued the Gallery should take the deep plunge into the modern art of today.

"I feel we can do both," Mrs. H. Gates Lloyd, vice president of the Gallery, commented yesterday. "But some others didn't. It wasn't really discord, rather discussion of many points of view."

Another member of the board of trustees indicated there had been reservations over the Van Gogh exhibit, which opens Feb. 2. Some trustees, he said, felt it should be shown in an "older museum."

Mrs. Breeskin, who was in New York City yesterday for

the opening of a show at the Guggenheim Museum, could not be reached for comment. She came to Washington from the Baltimore Museum of Art two years ago to open the new Gallery here.

"Mrs. Breeskin has given us the most wonderful public image," Mrs. Lloyd said. "No other director could have come here and made so many friends."

The Gallery, Mrs. Lloyd said, is on firm ground with foundation grants and exceeded its membership goal of 1000.

"Galleries do change directors," she commented. "We are here to stay."

Julius Eisenstein, the president of the Gallery, said there has been no decision on a successor to Mrs. Breeskin. Alice Denney, the assistant director, is now on a six-month leave.

Eisenstein said the board of trustees accepted Mrs. Breeskin's resignation with "great regret and expressed sincere thanks for her leadership in the important early stages of the gallery's operation."